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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 001819

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DEPARTMENT FOR A/S FRAZER, S/E NATSIOS, AND AF/SPG
NSC FOR PITTMAN AND HUDSON
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU

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TAGS: PGOV PREL KPKO UN AU SU

SUBJECT: LAM AKOL CRITICIZES SPLM FOR NEGOTIATING IN BAD FAITH

Classified By: CDA Alberto Fernandez, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶11. (C) Summary: Erstwhile Minister of Foreign Affairs, potential Minister of Cabinet Affairs and SPLM renegade Lam Akol told CDA Fernandez November 13 that the SPLM is engaged in dangerous brinksmanship and is negotiating in bad faith with the NCP. He said that if the SPLM wants to make accusations that the NCP is blocking progress on the CPA, it should provide examples of proposals that it has made in the Assessment and Evaluation Commission (AEC) that the NCP has blocked (Akol was removed from the AEC long ago because his own party saw him as too passive before the NCP). Regarding the cabinet reshuffle that stripped him of his post, Akol said the SPLM changed the goalposts in the current standoff: at first the issue was the SPLM's right to name its candidates to GNU positions, then it became broader CPA implementation, now it is Abyei. End summary.

Negotiating in bad faith

¶12. (C) During a meeting with CDA Fernandez November 13, SPLM renegade and former GNU Foreign Minister Dr. Lam Akol accused the SPLM of negotiating in bad faith. He said the original proposal in the SPLM Politburo had been to rejoin the GNU after the cabinet reshuffle. "In the middle of the fight, they changed their position," claimed Akol. Akol pointed out that SPLM demands had grown from control of ministerial appointments, to broader implementation of the CPA, to resolution of an entire package of items including Abyei. Akol said he wasn't sure that the SPLM is united in this approach, and alleged that Secretary General Pagan Amum had exceeded his mandate in his incendiary public statements. "Too many statements is not a good strategy for him," observed Akol. Akol said the goal of the SPLM should not be to go to extremes, but rather to make real inroads in the North with constituencies there. "They have already won the South, and if they don't make inroads in the North they will QjtStbgCome"afothr SkuTh%rn poliTicqn ``t9Q @coqkMef Mkl.QQ ,Q.),!/-%,5Q---nQQ*Degrntsm EQQIBs"y|l~%Qm)#Q,=##l/-=3.3M-\$}UQQF_)Fy. Akol accused the SPLM of not doing their part to move the CPA forward by actively writing proposals and pushing initiatives forward, but rather playing a more passive role in the commissions. (Comment: While it is true that the SPLM has sometimes not even shown up for AEC meetings - according to feedback from some partners - it is not fair to say they have not been active. They have made substantive input into the draft electoral law and all other commission documents. End comment)

Live up to your promises

¶4. (C) Akol reminded CDA that the U.S. has a responsibility to follow through on promises made to the signatories of the CPA, including consideration of removing Sudan from the list of state sponsors of terrorism, upgrading to an ambassador, and other promises. He claimed he had warned President Bashir that the U.S. would make promises on Sudan that it could not deliver on. Akol observed that the U.S. government is prisoner to an unreasonable public opinion when it comes to Sudan policy. "You helped create negative public opinion on Sudan, and now you have lost control of it," lamented Akol.

¶5. (C) Comment: Although sidelined at his home, where we met with him, the jovial Akol was clearly engaged politically and had a firm grasp of events both in Khartoum and Juba. Akol continues as a member of the SPLM, though not a powerful one given his virtual defection to the NCP line during his tenure as Foreign Minister in the GNU. As the current political crisis plays out, Akol sits on the sidelines and no doubt calculates how he may make another entrance, either as a reformed member of the SPLM or a member of a future governing

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coalition in Khartoum following elections. Given his history of duplicity within the SPLM and his perspective as a minority Shilluk in the predominantly Dinka SPLM, Akol knows he will never be at the center of SPLM politics and decision-making. However he remains a wily and important player in Sudanese politics given his history and his status in the Shilluk tribe. He is best summed up by his bitter rival and fellow Shilluk, who observed to CDA in a later meeting that "Lam is very intelligent and calculating, it is just that he has decided that in the end the NCP will win and he intends to be on the winning side."

FERNANDEZ